

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

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SUBJ: A RECAP OF DANISH/UK FISHERY PROBLEMS, JAN. 1978

1. THE DANISH PRESS AND INDUSTRY RESPONSE TO LAST WEEK'S EC FISH-
ERY COUNCIL MEETING WAS, AS EXPECTED, HEAVILY BIASED. THE UK PRESS
WAS MORE RESTRAINED, ALTHOUGH UK FISHERY TRADE PUBLICATIONS WERE
QUITE STRIDENT. BOTH SIDES REITERATED POSITIONS TAKEN BY THEIR RESPEC
TIVE NEGOTIATING
REPRESENTATIVES. PRIVATELY, BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT THE GAP BE-
TWEEN THEM WAS BEING NARROWED.

2. HISTORICALLY, DENMARK SUPPORTS THE CONTINUATION OF THE EC FISH-
ERY POLICY ESTABLISHED BEFORE THE SIX BECAME NINE, OR EQUAL ACCESS
FOR ALL COMMUNITY VESSELS IN ALL COMMUNITY WATERS. THE UK
ADAMANTLY OPPOSES THIS PRINCIPLE AND FAVORS A REVISION OF THE
EXISTING COMMUNITY POLICY TO GIVE ITS FISHERMEN A LARGER SHARE OF
THE NORTH SEA RESOURCES, WHICH ARE MAINLY FOUND IN BRITISH WATERS.
A LARGER SHARE, THEY ARGUE, WOULD COMPENSATE FOR THE UK LOSS OF
ITS DISTANT WATER FISHING (OFF ICELAND AND NORWAY). THERE IS ALSO
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THE PROBLEM OF ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION PROGRAM TO
ENABLE THE QUANTITY OF HIGH VALUE FISH STOCKS TO INCREASE. THE UK
ARGUES THAT IT IS IN THE BEST POSITION TO FORMULATE SUCH A PROGRAM.

3. THE DISCUSSION IN THE EC HAS REVOLVED AROUND THE UK CLAIM FOR
AN EXCLUSIVE 0-12 MILE ZONE AND DOMINANT PREFERENCE IN A ZONE
FROM 12-50 MILES. IT IS THE LATTER ISSUE WHICH IS BEING SO HOTLY

NEGOTIATED. IN DECEMBER THE UK TABLED ITS DEMAND FOR 45 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH IN THE 12-50 MILE ZONE WHEN THE EC OFFERED 21 PERCENT. IN THE MID-JANUARY MEETING THE EC INCREASED ITS PROPOSAL SO THAT THE UK WOULD RECEIVE 31.3 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL. THIS WOULD PLACE THE UK CATCH AT 852,000 MT. WITHIN EC WATERS AND POSSIBLY OVER 1 MILLION TONS TOTAL WHEN FISHERIES OUTSIDE THE EC ZONE ARE INCLUDED. THUS THE UK CATCH WOULD BE VERY CLOSE TO ITS AVERAGE OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS. HOWEVER, THE UK TURNED DOWN THIS PROPOSAL AS UNACCEPTABLE.

4. INDUSTRIAL FISHING ACCOUNTS FOR 80 PERCENT OF DANISH LANDINGS AND FOOD FISH THE REMAINING 20 PERCENT. THUS THE DANISH FISH MEAL OPERATORS ARE MOST ANXIOUS TO MINIMIZE ANY LOSS OF THEIR INDUSTRIAL FISHERY. ONE OF THE DANISH FISH MEAL OPERATORS ESTIMATES DANISH MEAL PRODUCTION WILL DECLINE ONE-THIRD AS A RESULT OF EXPECTED CHANGES WITH RESPECT TO ACCESS AND CONSERVATIONS. MOST OTHER INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES ARE NOT SO PESSIMISTIC.

5. A LOOK AT SOME OF THE INDUSTRIAL FISH STOCKS INDICATES SOME WEAK AREAS. THE HERRING, UPON WHICH THE INDUSTRY WAS BUILT, IS NOW CLOSE TO ERADICATION. A HERRING SUBSTITUTE, SPRAT, IS IN THE RESTRICTED CLASS BECAUSE USUALLY THE TWO SPECIES SCHOOL TOGETHER. THE HERRING CURB WILL THUS REDUCE OR HALT FISHING ON BOTH SPECIES. THE BEST FISHING AREA FOR NORWAY POUT OFF SCOTLAND, WHICH HAS NOW BEEN RESTRICTED, IS ALSO THE NURSERY GROUND FOR JUVENILE FOOD FISH SPECIES; THEREFORE THIS SOURCE OF INDUSTRIAL FISH WILL BE UNCLASSIFIED

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LOST. THE DANES COULD INCREASE THEIR CATCH OF SAND EELS AND MACKEREL, AND ALSO CONSIDERABLY INCREASE THEIR BLUE WHITING CATCH, ALL OF WHICH WOULD HELP TO OFFSET THE LOSSES MENTIONED ABOVE. A MOVE TO DIFFERENT SPECIES, HOWEVER, PARTICULARLY THE BLUE WHITING, WOULD INVOLVE INVESTMENTS IN VESSELS AND GEAR. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THE DANES ARE READY TO MAKE INVESTMENTS IN FISHERIES DURING THE EXISTING UNSETTLED CONDITIONS.

6. ANOTHER POINT WORRYING THE DANES IS THE INDICATIONS THEY HAVE RECEIVED THAT THE UK IS EXPANDING ITS FISH MEAL INDUSTRY. IF THAT SHOULD HAPPEN, THE DANES WOULD HAVE TO FIND OTHER CUSTOMERS FOR THE 35 PERCENT (101,391 MT. IN 1976) OF THEIR FISH MEAL PRODUCTION WHICH THEY SELL TO THE UK. (IN THIS CONNECTION, THE RIBBON WAS RECENTLY CUT FOR A NEW 7.5 MILLION DOLLAR REDUCTION PLANT IN ABERDEEN, CAPABLE OF PRODUCING 200 MT. OF MEAL PER DAY.).

7. AS A MEASURE TO HELP THE DANES PRESERVE THEIR DOMINANT POSITION IN EUROPE'S FISH MEAL INDUSTRY, THE EC IS PRESSURING THE DANES TO REDUCE THEIR FOOD-FISH FISHERY AND RECEIVE IN RETURN HIGHER QUOTAS FOR INDUSTRIAL FISH. THE DANISH QUOTA FOR SAND EELS WOULD BE INCREASED FROM 300,000 MT. TO 400,000 MT. THE DANES WOULD ALSO RECEIVE A NEW QUOTA FOR 20,000 MT. OF MACKEREL FROM THE GROUNDS

OFF WEST SCOTLAND. THE FOLLOWING REDUCTIONS HAVE BEEN PROPOSED BY
THE EC IN DANISH QUOTAS FOR FOOD-FISH: COD FROM 41,700 MT. TO
32,000 MT.; HADDOCK FROM 19,300 MT. TO 11 60# MT.; SAITHE FROM
44,000 MT. TO 22,000 MT.; WHITING FROM 59,000 MT. TO 39,000 MT.
THE ABOVE FIGURES, WHICH HEVE BEEN PROPOSED BY THE EC, ARE SUBJECT
TO FURTHER NEGOOTIATIONS.
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